



Who We Are

Environmental Epidemiology is responsible for environmental public health activities that relate to chemical exposures and pollution in Tennessee.



Our Federal Partner

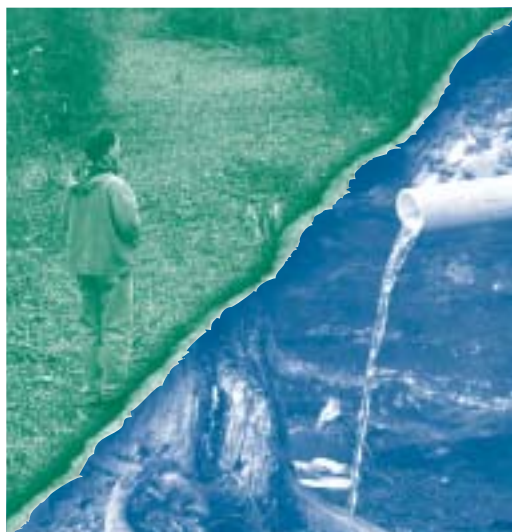
Environmental Epidemiology is funded through a Cooperative Agreement with the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). ATSDR is the federal public health agency whose mission is to prevent exposure and adverse human health effects and diminished quality of life associated with exposure to hazardous substances from waste sites, unplanned releases, and other sources of pollution in the environment. ATSDR describes many environmental health topics on their Website (www.ATSDR.cdc.gov).



Our Other Partners

Environmental Epidemiology works with other federal, state, and local agencies including:

- US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) www.epa.gov
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) www.cdc.gov
- Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) www.tdec.net
- State, County, and Metropolitan Health Departments



Communicable & Environmental Disease Services

Environmental Epidemiology

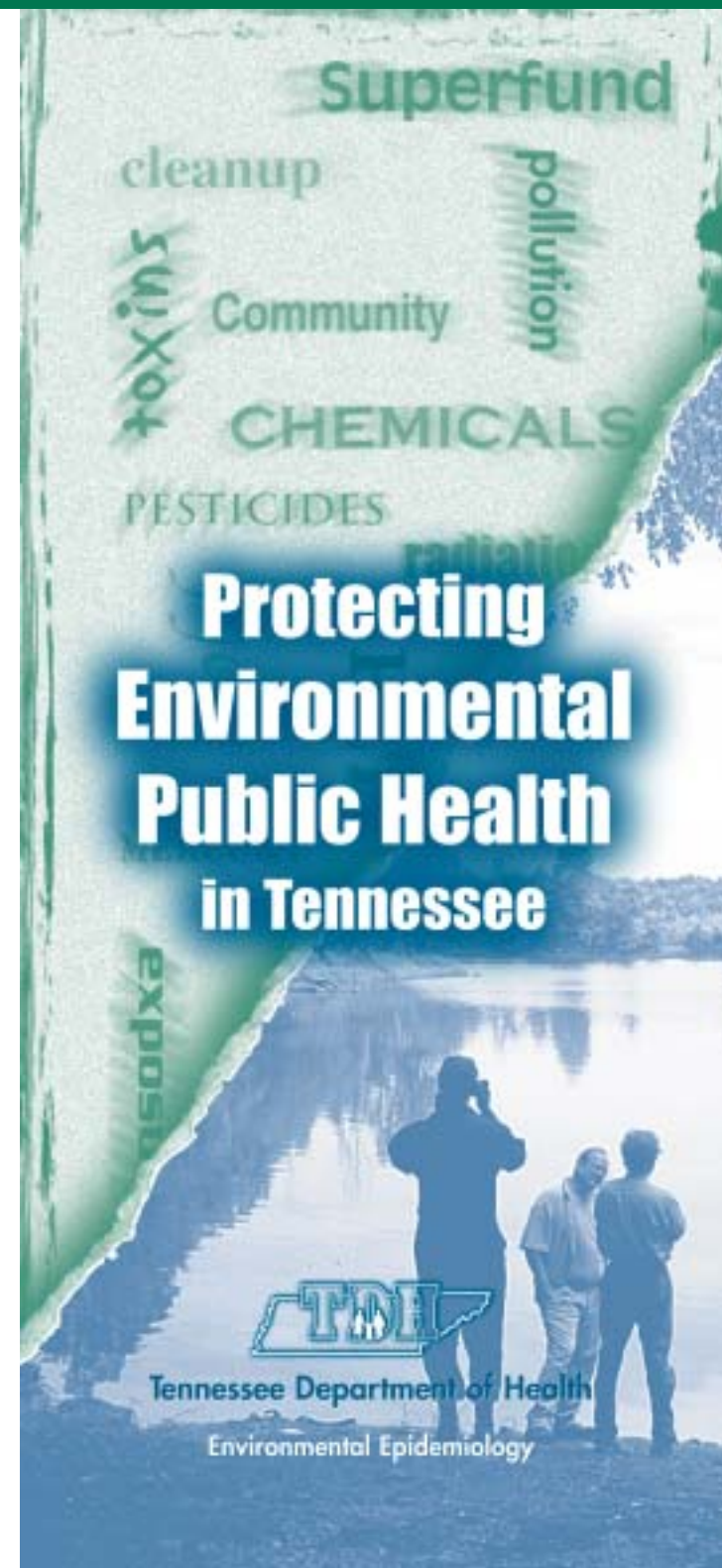
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Environmental Health Investigations

Environmental Epidemiology investigates sites where people may be at risk of chemical exposure and takes action to make sure people are safe. An investigation may include these steps:

1. Investigate ways people might come into contact with chemicals whether in air, water, soil, or biota
2. Review environmental data
3. Determine if people are being dangerously exposed
4. Calculate the risks to public health
5. Provide recommendations to eliminate hazardous exposures, thus keeping people safe
6. Develop a public health action plan to perform any necessary changes, cleanups, or educational needs.



Environmental Public Health Documents

Under a Cooperative Agreement with the ATSDR, we answer environmental public health questions in formal science-based documents. These publications are called Public Health Assessments (PHAs) and Public Health Consultations (HCs). Each report is reviewed and certified by the ATSDR prior to publication, ensuring that our public health conclusions are both accurate and protective.



Keeping People Safe: Helping Communities

Environmental Epidemiology works to keep people safe from hazardous chemicals. Examples of actions performed include:

- Determining the level of public health hazard posed by Superfund or other hazardous waste sites
- Visiting communities to hear their environmental health concerns
- Working with other government agencies, community groups, and concerned citizens to better understand environmental exposure
- Recommending actions that need to be performed to safeguard public health
- Working with communities to better understand the relationship between their health concerns and pollution
- Studying the health of communities exposed to environmental hazards
- Educating health care professionals and the general public about how to minimize exposure to hazardous substances



Can EEP Make or Enforce Regulations?

No. Tennessee Department of Health Environmental Epidemiology is not an environmental regulatory agency. When actions are needed to keep people safe, we provide advice and recommendations to other agencies including TDEC and EPA. Examples of recommendations are connecting homes to community water supply or fencing off a hazardous area.



Environmental Sampling

Environmental Epidemiology does not collect environmental samples, but often interprets environmental sampling data of air, water, soil, or biota for other agencies. As part of a health investigation, we can recommend that EPA or TDEC collect environmental samples. Guidelines on how to collect samples have to be followed to assure quality and be upheld in a court of law.

